



Rochester's Committee on Urban Design & Environment · 2122 Campus Drive SE, Suite 100 · Rochester, MN 55904

The Committee on Urban Design and Environment (CUDE) met at 11:30 AM on Thursday, December 17, 2009 in Room 104 City Hall, Rochester, MN.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dick Abraham, Gail Eadie, Mark Engel, Sandi Goslee, Mark Jasmin, Jim Judisch, Stephan Lewis, Lindsey Meek, Roger Nelson, Dave Petersen, Terry Spaeth, Jean Weathers-Lowin

MEMBERS ABSENT

Nora Dooley, Zach Thaler

OTHERS PRESENT

Bonnie McDonald, Michael Wojcik, Hal Henderson, Doug Knott, HPC Members

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

The meeting started at 11:35.

Mr. Jasmin motion/Mr. Petersen second to approve the November minutes. Unanimous approval.

Referral Notices

None

Notes of Appreciation

None

CUDE Awards

Mr. Petersen stated that the HPC wants their own awards ceremony this year, but would be open to discussing a joint awards ceremony in the future. Ms. Goslee commented that the directors of the Planning Department, City Administration, and RPU have been discussing combining the CUDE Awards with the RPU/Olmsted County Environmental Achievement Awards. We need to recruit more members for the Awards Subcommittee to evaluate the viability of this option.

NEW BUSINESS

GH Holdings Project

Roger Nelson made the presentation on behalf of HGA. The project is located on 1st Ave SW, just south of 3rd Street and adjacent to Bilotti's Italian Village. It is a revision of a plan originally conceived a couple of years ago. The building would be 9 floors high with a basement and a skyway connection to the 1st Street ramp. The developer views the scale of this project as being a transition from the urban core to the urban village. Because additional square footage is being added to the original proposal, an incentive development requirement has been triggered. The original proposal did not require any public hearings.

The building would have ground level retail space with residential, classroom, and congregational space above. There will be a courtyard on the 3rd level. There would be 98 residential units, 14 per floor, for a total of 208 beds. While the intent is for this to be for UMR students, the design is such that they could be used as market-rate apartments in the future. LEED certification is being pursued. The developer believes this project fits with the characteristics of the urban village overlay standards.

Rochester Preservation Study

Bonnie McDonald of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota gave a presentation on the need for a preservation study in Rochester. She stressed the need to think about the downtown holistically, not as individual sites. The urban village should be a mix of the new and the old to create a sustainable, unique area.

She discussed the notion of preservation as an economic tool. It promotes reinvestment and retains or increases the tax base; it is not about freezing a community in time or making every historic building a museum. Reinvestment in one building leads to reinvestment in others; studies show that this is at a rate of \$40 in return for every \$1 investment.

“Embodied energy” also needs to be considered in construction. That is, the energy costs of creating new materials must be weighed against the savings of keeping the old. Monetary incentives are out there for assistance.

Mr. Petersen asked that CUDE support a preservation study for Rochester that analyzes how our historic buildings contribute to the urban fabric. He will bring a letter for CUDE to review at the January meeting. Ms. McDonald also encouraged applying for Legacy Grant money to carry this project out.

Adjourn – 1:00. Next meeting will be at 11:30 on January 21st in Room 320 City Hall.